Scott vs. Sanford Case

One hot sunny day in a courtroom, a African American dripped with sweat from the intensity of the debate. The white man, glared at him with beady eyes, waiting for yet another outcome of the contest. The Dred Scott Case which was taken place in 1820 between Scott vs. Sanford. Scott was a slave who was brought on to free soil, traveling with the army. Scott declared his freedom, but was not granted it. He kept sending this case to the court until it finally made it all the way to the Supreme Court. Would Dred Scott get his freedom? Or would he be like all the other slaves that attempted? Throughout my piece I will discuss Dred Scott background; his strive for freedom, and the Dred Scott decision.

In 1795 on a small plantation in Virginia, a young African American was born to the Peter Blow plantation. Dred Scott was a slave his whole entire life. When his old owner died Scott was sold to Dr. John Emerson. Emerson was a surgeon in the military. Emerson who was always traveling went to the free state of Illinois and on to the Wisconsin territory. Both of these areas were free places for slaves after his times in this territory the doctor took him back to Missisouri. After the surgeon died he was under the control of his widow. He attempted to buy and take legal ways to get his freedom. He later married Harriet Robinson who he met at Fort Snelling while moving with army. They had 4 kids, but two of them died when they were younger. The two girls and his wife were supporters in his legal fight for freedom.

Dred Scott while under the control of John Sanford was in a huge legal battle for his freedom. He first attempted to escape from slavery and run away, but was unsuccessful. After many attempts he tried to buy his freedom from his owners. In 1846 he filed to the Missouri Court for his freedom, and debated that he had been on free soil for years. After years of filing the case, it came before the Supreme Court. The debate led by Roger B. Taney ruled against Scott 7 to 2. Taney, trying to back up his decision said that Scott could not file against Sanford because he was not a U.S. Citizen just because he was held in slavery. After the decision Scott still would not stop his fight for freedom. After his long fight he got what he wanted.

Judge Taney may have ruled against Scott 7 to 2, but he never stopped fighting. His actions drew tensions to the Civil War, and helped later get freedom. After Emerson died his wife married Calvin Chaffee. He was a congressman from Massachusetts who was against slavery. Chaffee convinced Sanford to give Scott his freedom. Scott received his freedom in 1857 after a long hard fight. He died in 1858 after a life of hard work and sacrifice for his race.

After Dred Scott died slavery was gone. His hopes and dreams finally became true for his race. Without Dred Scott, a man who wasn’t recognized for his fight for freedom, slavery may not have been abolished forever.